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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 839
By Fowlkes

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the staff, volunteers, and patrons of the Ardmore Public Library upon the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of this General Assembly to recognize those public institutions of learning and culture that are celebrating a milestone in their venerable history; and

WHEREAS, the Ardmore Public Library is one such praiseworthy institution which has served as a place of learning and enrichment for the good people of Ardmore for twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s when the Blue Grass Regional Library in Columbia considered terminating its bookmobile station service to the Ardmore area, some of the patrons of the library station decided to establish a Public Library in Ardmore; and

WHEREAS, gaining the support of the Blue Grass Regional Library Director, Joy Mowery, the organizer encouraged city officials to appoint a library board and secure a location for the library; and

WHEREAS, in early 1977, the City and Town of Ardmore appointed Margaret Baker, Dr. Bill Berry, Lura Berry, Helen Currin, Ramona Flacy, Jack Mathis, Nancy Meneese, and Joy

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Mowery to the first Ardmore Public Library Board; and the Ardmore Board of Mayor and Aldermen generously offered the rear of the municipal building to service as the location of the new library; and

WHEREAS, through the hard work and dedicated efforts of the first library board, the Ardmore Community Library, which was later renamed the Ardmore Public Library, was opened on April 23, 1977 with a formal ribbon cutting ceremony held by the Board Members and performed by then Ardmore, Tennessee Mayor Austin Whitt and Ardmore, Alabama Mayor Gerlin Hills; and

WHEREAS, after raising funds for shelves for the library, the dedicated Board Members of the Ardmore Public Library, with the help of their spouses, built the first shelves for the library themselves and these shelves are still in use in the library's genealogy room; the electrical work for the library was performed by Vice-Chairman of the Library Board, Jack Mathis; and

WHEREAS, the Ardmore Public library was then staffed entirely by volunteers and was open only six hours a week; by August of 1977, the library had 144 cardholders, which increased to 288 cardholders by November of 1977, and a collection consisting of 1,700 hardback books and 250 paperback books; in the first four months of service, the new library checked out almost 2,000 books; and

WHEREAS, due to the exponential popularity and patron growth of the Ardmore Public Library, the Board Members hired Clara Blankenship to serve as their first librarian, using funds provided by the Comprehensive Education Training Act; and

WHEREAS, by January of 1979, the Ardmore Public Library had increased its hours of operation to 20 hours a week and the library's resources had greatly expanded through individual donations and memorials and the munificence of the Blue Grass Regional Library, which supplied new books to the library every three months; and

WHEREAS, during its twenty-five years of service to the Ardmore community, the Library has been skillfully and conscientiously led by a number of outstanding librarians and

Board Members, who have dedicated their time and talents to the betterment of the library and improving the lives of their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, under the guidance of these exemplary citizens, the Ardmore Public Library has expanded its collection of resources, added a genealogy room, and established a summer reading program for children and a story time for younger children; through the Malinda and Bill Gates Foundation, the library established a computer center with Internet access; and

WHEREAS, Angela Smith was appointed Librarian in January of 1980; during her tenure, the library added record albums to its collections and had between 1,500 and 2,000 books available for checkout; and

WHEREAS, from 1981 through 1991, Shirley Hendricks served with distinction as the Librarian and Betty Douthit as the Assistant Librarian; during their progressive tenures, the library's facilities and resources were significantly modernized; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, through the revenue sharing funds provided by the Ardmore, Tennessee Board of Mayor and Aldermen, the Library Board was able to install new carpet, build more bookshelves, and add a book drop; and

WHEREAS, the Ardmore Public Library, in 1983, purchased \$1,464.72 worth of new resources, increasing its materials by a few thousand books; and

WHEREAS, the Ardmore community celebrated the tenth anniversary of their public library in April of 1987; still located in the back of the municipal building, the library had grown to 1,500 cardholders and 6,600 in-house volumes; and

WHEREAS, Ramona Flacy resigned from the Ardmore Public Library Board in 1986 and Janey Thorton was appointed in her place; Ramona Flacy rejoined the Board later and is a current member; in February of 1987, Jone Powers resigned from the Board and Debbie Eubanks was appointed in her place; in 1990, Joe Stagner was appointed to the Library Board and, in 1991, Lura Betry resigned from the Board; and

WHEREAS, in March of 1991, the Ardmore Public Library was remodeled and an addition and parking spaces were added; Jack Mathis ably managed the project, which was mostly completed by July of 1991; Lynn Wales conscientiously served as the librarian from 1992 through 1995; and

WHEREAS, Verlin Collins, the current librarian, was appointed in 1995; under his astute leadership, the Ardmore Public Library, with an expansion of 200 square feet, added a separate room for children and a reading and genealogy room in the year 2000; operating with an annual budget of \$30,530, the Library had over 2,588 patrons and a circulation of over 24,659 resources in the year 2001; and

WHEREAS, the Ardmore Public Library, during its remarkable history, has been fortunate to have a network of supporters who have volunteered their time and energies to ensure that Ardmore had a library for the enjoyment and education of all its citizens; in 1990, Friends of the Library was established to assist the library with fundraising and other community endeavors; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, April 20, 2002, the Ardmore Public Library's current Board Members, Joe Stagner, Jeff Hodges, Ramona Flacy, Margaret Baker, Becky Smith, Shara Flacy, and Phyllis Fowler; full-time librarian, Verlin Collins; two part-time Assistant Librarians; and numerous volunteers and patrons will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of this extraordinary library, celebrating its immeasurable contributions to the citizenry of Ardmore and the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, its is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud one of Tennessee's exemplary public institutions, the Ardmore Public Library, upon the occasion of its silver anniversary; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby join with the people of Ardmore in celebrating the twenty-fifth

anniversary of the Ardmore Public Library, recognizing its indelible contributions to the lives of the citizens of Ardmore, and express our deep appreciation to the past and current Members of the Library Board and the volunteers and staff of the Ardmore Public Library for their meritorious service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.